



1909

# FERGUS COUNTY COURTHOUSE

## CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

712 W. Main · Lewistown, MT 59457  
Ph: 406-535-5119 · Fax: 406-535-9023  
email: commissioners@co.fergus.mt.us

**Commissioners:**

John Jensen  
Carl Seilstad  
Ken Ronish



2009

### Comment on Rural Broadband Strategy DA 09-561 GN Docket No. 09-29

Broadband has certainly become a necessity in this day and age. In rural Montana, we have seen an ever increasing need for such services.

Our agriculture community has embraced the technology for use in management of their respective farms and ranches. Families are using the technology to telecommute to their jobs. Residents are using the technology for online educational opportunities. And businesses are utilizing the technology to expand the products and services they offer along with their customer base.

We also have a growing need to expand our distance learning and business incubator programs. By doing this we help the economies of Montana and the United States by providing a vehicle for small business and potential employees to start or better their financial and competitive edge. Small business, as we all know, is the cornerstone for the overall health of the United States economy.

Although we have some form of broadband available in Montana, the access has limited availability and a high cost if available. In a considerable amount of cases dialup is the only alternative.

Our telecommunications companies and cooperatives are expanding Cable/DSL services, but not at a rate that will allow rural Montanans to compete in this fast expanding and highly competitive world.

We encourage you to fund this very worthwhile cause by funding companies and cooperatives that have a proven track record in providing broadband access to rural areas.

Sincerely,

John C. Jensen  
Fergus County Commissioner